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ABSTRACT

The relationship of assistant/associate deans to deans in the organization structure of colleges of education is examined, and an organizational model that may aid in improving the management of colleges of education is presented. Based on a spring 1983 survey of 265 colleges of education, 73 public and 3 private institutions provided organization charts of their college of education, and 50 institutions provided written job descriptions for assistant/associate deans. The organization charts and job descriptions were analyzed to determine the line staff relationships between deans, assistant/associate deans, and other positions within the colleges of education. It was found that assistant/associate deans are widely used to assist deans in carrying out their leadership roles. Deans have generally retained direct control over the instructional aspects of their college's program. Assistant/associate deans have assumed leadership roles over such support areas as research, student personnel services, and administration of the college of education. It is recommended that consideration be given to an organizational pattern that makes more use of associate deans in line relationships with the dean and department chairs, and that assistant deans and directors (i.e., student teaching) should be in staff relationships to the associate dean. (SW)

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ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE DEANS IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION[1]

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Abstract

There is a need to improve the organization and management of colleges of education. Based on a survey of 265 colleges of education, two major organization patterns were in evidence. In both cases assistant/associate deans served to support the managerial functions of the office of the dean through a staff relationship. Consideration should be given to an organization pattern that makes more use of associate deans in line relationships with the dean and department chairs. Assistant deans and directors (i.e., student teaching) should be in staff relationships to the associate dean. The design proposed in the full paper can aid in improving the management of a college of education.

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Assistant/Associate Deans in the Organization Structure of Colleges of Education

In the last 25 years, the organization and administration of colleges of education have changed rapidly. During the 60's there was rapid growth in the number of students entering teacher education programs and a corresponding increase in faculty and resources. In the 70's there was a decline in the number of undergraduates and an increase in the number of students pursuing work toward graduate degrees. The age of accountability came upon higher education and there was a dramatic increase in regulations and the like which in turn increased the paper workload. In the 80's a period of retrenchment and revitalization began, in anticipation of additional shifts in enrollment patterns and to answer the cry for more accountability in higher education.

In order to cope with the increased workloads, the position of assistant or associate dean was created to aid the dean in providing academic leadership and in managing the education unit. A review of the literature indicated that no studies had been conducted on the role and status of assistant/associate deans. Also, no studies were found in which the organizations of colleges of education were examined in relation to the roles, duties and functions of the dean and assistant/associate deans.

The purposes of the present study were to examine the relationship of assistant/associate deans to deans in the organization structure of colleges of education and to present an organizational model that may aid in improving the management of colleges of education. It is felt

that this study can help improve the organization and management of colleges of education.

Methodology

In the Spring of 1983, an instrument was constructed and a survey conducted of 198 public and 67 private institutions (N=265) to determine the role and status of assistant/associate deans (Doak & Ayers, 1984). These institutions were members of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and graduated 300 or more individuals in the Fall of 1981 who were eligible to enter some phase of the teaching profession. As a result of the survey 204 assistant/associate deans of education were identified at 137 institutions. Fifty institutions did not employ an assistant/associate dean of education.

Seventy-three public and three private institutions (55.5% of those who had assistant/associate deans of education) provided organization charts of their college of education. Also, 50 institutions provided written job descriptions for assistant/associate deans. This represented 24.5% of the total respondents from the earlier survey, and included job descriptions from 47 public institutions, one private institution and two from unknown institutions. Job descriptions and organization charts were available from 39 institutions, eleven institutions provided only job descriptions and 37 provided only organization charts. The material provided by private institutions were limited. However, there did not appear to be any differences between private and public institutions. Therefore, the data were combined for this present study.

The organization charts and job descriptions were analyzed to determine the line staff relationships between deans, assistant/

associate deans and other positions within colleges of education. Based on these analyses, charts were prepared that depicted the most common organization patterns in colleges of education.

Findings

In order to achieve complete accuracy in the analyses of the data it would have been necessary to have had job descriptions for each assistant/associate dean depicted on the organization charts of the colleges of education. Also, it would have been necessary to have had organization charts to accompany all of the job descriptions. It is felt, however, that the results depict the situations as they currently are found in colleges of education.

Eighty-seven institutions were represented in the study. In the Fall of 1982 enrollment in teacher education in these institutions ranged from less than 500 to over 2,500. The institutions employed 90 associate deans, 39 assistant deans and 7 individuals with titles such as assistant to the dean. These seven individuals appeared to be working in a capacity similar to an assistant/associate dean of education. Sixty-eight institutions employed one or more associate deans, 32 employed one or more assistant deans and 14 employed an assistant dean and one or more associate deans. Three institutions employed an associate dean and an assistant dean, two employed assistant deans and an assistant to the dean, one institution employed all three types of individuals and one employed only an assistant to the dean.

In any attempt to analyze the structure of a college of education, one must keep in mind the three basic functions of higher education--instruction, research and public service. Instruction is the most

important endeavor in higher education and receives the greatest attention in any organization chart. All charts, examined as a part of this study, depicted the dean and the division or department chairs in, most commonly, a direct line relationship. The organization charts for larger institutions showed line staff functions for the other primary areas of emphasis in higher education, i.e., research and service.

Analyses of the position of assistant/associate deans in the 76 organization charts of the colleges of education indicated a variety of relationships. In general the associate deans were in some type of line relationships to the dean, while many of the assistant deans were in staff positions. It was felt that the charts could be classified into four major categories depending on the position(s) of the assistant/associate deans.

At two smaller institutions (2.6%) teacher education was a part of another college, i.e., Human Resources. In both cases an individual designated as an Associate Dean of Education provided leadership for the unit and reported directly to the dean of the college. Chairpersons and one or more staff positions reported directly to the associate dean. Figure 1 shows a chart for this type organization.

Insert Figure 1 about here

The organization pattern at small and medium size institutions is shown in Figure 2. Twenty-seven (35.5%) institutions employed at least one individual in a staff position with the title of associate dean, assistant dean or assistant to the dean. In general staff positions

tended to provide direct assistance to the office of the dean of the college of education. The most common functions for these positions were in such areas as general management of the college, coordinating student personnel services and acting as certification officer.

Insert Figure 2 about here

The most common organization pattern among the colleges of education (N=43, 56.6%) is shown in Figure 3. In general this pattern was found in larger institutions. In this pattern of organization, typically, there were at least two or more assistant/associate deans who were responsible for such major areas as research, administration of the college, public service and continuing education, student personnel services, and graduate programs. In smaller institutions, the individual holding a particular position may have been responsible for more than one area. The position of assistant dean or assistant to the dean was generally responsible for assisting with the general administration of the college, i.e., budget control, supervision of clerical staff, and special studies. In some cases there was an associate dean for academic affairs. However, in all cases division or department chairs reported directly to the dean. It appeared that even, in large institutions the dean still controls directly the instructional functions of the college. In all cases it appeared, however, there is one associate dean who has been designated to act in the absence of the dean.

Insert Figure 3 about here

The fourth organization pattern for colleges of education is shown in Figure 4. In this organization pattern, the associate dean is in a direct line of authority and reports directly to the dean. Division and/or department chairs report to the dean through the associate dean. The assistant dean and director are in staff positions answering to the dean through the associate dean. Five institutions (5.3%) reported a similar structure. The next section of this paper explores this model in depth and advocates its use in improving the organization structure of a college of education.

Insert Figure 4 about here

In summary there are four major organization patterns in use in colleges of education. Assistant/associate deans are widely used to assist deans in carrying out their leadership roles. Deans have generally retained direct control over the instructional aspects of their college's program. Assistant/associate deans have assumed leadership roles over such support areas as research, student personnel services and administration of the college of education.

Organization Model

In any discussion of the organization of a college of education one must begin with the leader of the organization--the dean. Over the years the academic deanship has evolved into a position of total

leadership for an academic unit. The dean does not necessarily have all of the ideas, perform all of the work, or be the only leader within the organization. However, the dean must be the focal point and chief administrator, coordinating all efforts of the college.

An effective dean will establish a viable, workable organization pattern and fill each position with the best qualified individual to lead and fulfill that job. As in any organization, whether educational, business, military there are line and staff positions. Terry (1977) clearly established the types of authority and organizational relationships with line staff positions. Line authority is the superior-subordinate relationship which is evident in most organizations. In the military it is the commissioned officer to the non-commissioned officer to the soldier; in business it is chairman and board of directors to president or manager to supervisor to employee; and in education from the governing board to the president to the deans to the faculty. It is apparent in the above that only heads of units are cited in the organization and further that many line and staff positions are needed to complete an organization.

Terry (1977) described a staff position by defining the word staff as a stick or aid used to support line authority. On the other hand, Allen (1970) would rather use terms such as supportive, auxiliary or service personnel instead of staff. Terry (1977) divided staff positions into specialist staff (advisory, service, control, and functional) and personal (assistant and general) staff. He further pointed out the difference between line and staff by stating " . . . the line authority remains the avenue for direct performance of the work whereas the staff

line exists to support the line" (p.305). In theory there is a clear difference between line staff relationships, but in practice they become mixed.

Figure 4 shows a model for the organization of a college of education. In this model, the line staff relationships can be clearly seen. There is a clear line of authority running from the dean to the associate dean to the chairs. The assistant dean and director hold staff positions. The staff positions work together in concert with the chairs to carry out their work assignments and may, in fact, be working under direct order from the line positions to complete a task. This type of work relationship requires considerable diplomacy and cooperation on the part of all concerned if the organization proves to be an effective unit in achieving its assigned objectives.

In order to fully understand the organizational model presented in Figure 4 there is a need to define the line staff relationships of the various positions. The dean has full responsibility for the college in all matters. The dean may delegate responsibility to line and staff positions. The associate dean is a line position answering only and directly to the dean. In the absence of the dean, the associate dean may act as needed. The assistant dean is a staff position that answers through the associate dean to the dean. Usually the assistant dean has more than one specific areas of responsibility. A director is a staff position having one specific area of responsibility and answers to the dean through the associate dean. Departmental or divisional chairpersons are in a line position answering through the associate dean to the dean. Depending on the size of the college of

education, the organization allows for the elimination of positions that are not needed or for combining of positions.

The associate deanship is occupied by an individual who must be a diplomat as well as an individual who is willing to work side by side with subordinates. The associate dean is a line officer who carries out the plans formulated by the dean. The chairs answer through the associate dean to the dean, but not in every case. Some circumstances require the associate dean to always stand between the chairs and the dean in order to get the job done. On the other hand, the dean must be able to go directly to the chairs on some matters and the chairs must be able to go directly to the dean.

If this sounds confused and double talk--it can be. Again the key is the dean. The dean must clearly establish duties for each position and communicate that organization to each administrator and faculty member. The dean must leave the line and staff administrators free enough to perform their work and back them as they do the job. The line and staff must realize that the dean is the leader and that their ideas may or may not be accepted by the dean but that, in the end, it is the dean who is responsible for the college.

Problems in organization usually come from a lack of a clear organizational pattern and communication or from a weak leader resulting in too many "leaders." In any professional organization every effort must be made to cooperate and communicate. Each faculty member, the staff and line personnel, and the dean are highly educated professionals with immense possibilities for performance. An effective dean molds the group into a team that is creative in programming and

teaching, aided by offices to assist and to make the task easier.

Assistant and associate deans, to be an effective administrators, must first accept the dean as the leader of the college and pledge their complete support to the individual. This does not mean the dean has all the ideas or makes all the decisions. Morphet, Johns, and Reller (1974) alluded to a collegial concept of administration. This concept ". . . emphasizes academic freedom, scholarship, and the dignity of the individual, 2) provides that the faculty, and not the administrative hierarchy, shall make major policy and program decisions, . . ." (p. 109). Hersey and Blanchard (1982) provided an excellent discussion of the topics of management, leadership, and the development of human resources. Their book is a comprehensive discussion of all it takes to work effectively as a manager and leader of people. Their concepts fit the collegial model.

Cooperation and communication are the keystones with a dean who leads, respects others, and makes decisions. Staff and line personnel must make decisions that are acceptable to the dean and are, in fact, the type of decision the dean would make if he/she made the decision. If the assistant/associate dean, director, or chair cannot in good faith do this, he/she should resign. No organization functions well or long with one office fighting another. Every faculty member and student loses in this case.

Line positions have authority in their offices and have specific areas of responsibility. Staff positions have specific areas of responsibility but perform these tasks in the name of the dean. Among these staff positions are the director of certification, director of research,

director of laboratory experiences or student teaching, and assistant dean. The responsibilities of each office in the organization should be in writing and a matter of record. The actual working and effectiveness of the job relates to the personalities of the people involved and the communication between them.

If an associate dean and dean work well together, the associate will try to make each decision as he/she thinks the dean would make that decision. In this case, the associate can assume the responsibilities of the dean in his/her absence. Staff administrators should perform their tasks and operate their offices in the same manner whether the dean or the associate dean is in charge. It is clear from Figure 4 that staff offices have specific ongoing tasks to perform and that they answer to both the associate dean and dean.

The above was presented as a theoretical model for the organization of a college of education. In fact, the model is being employed in at least four colleges of education that were included in the present study. It is felt that the organization model has much to offer as a means for improving the day to day operation of colleges of education. As was noted in the opening section of this paper, accountability and the paper work glut are here to stay. In order to carry out the day to day operations of a college and to meet the needs of society, models such as the one suggested in this paper must be implemented, refined and disseminated to the education community.

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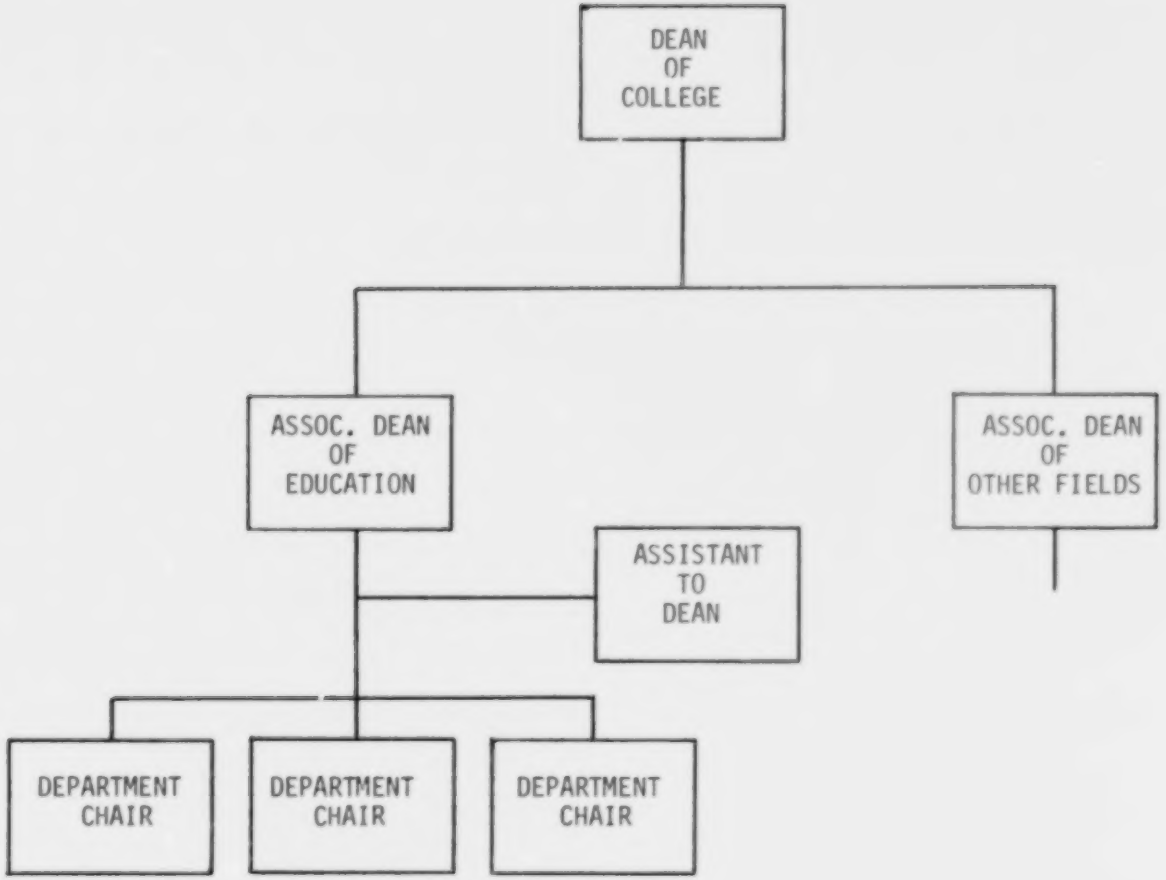

Figure 1. Organization chart for school of education within larger college of human resources.

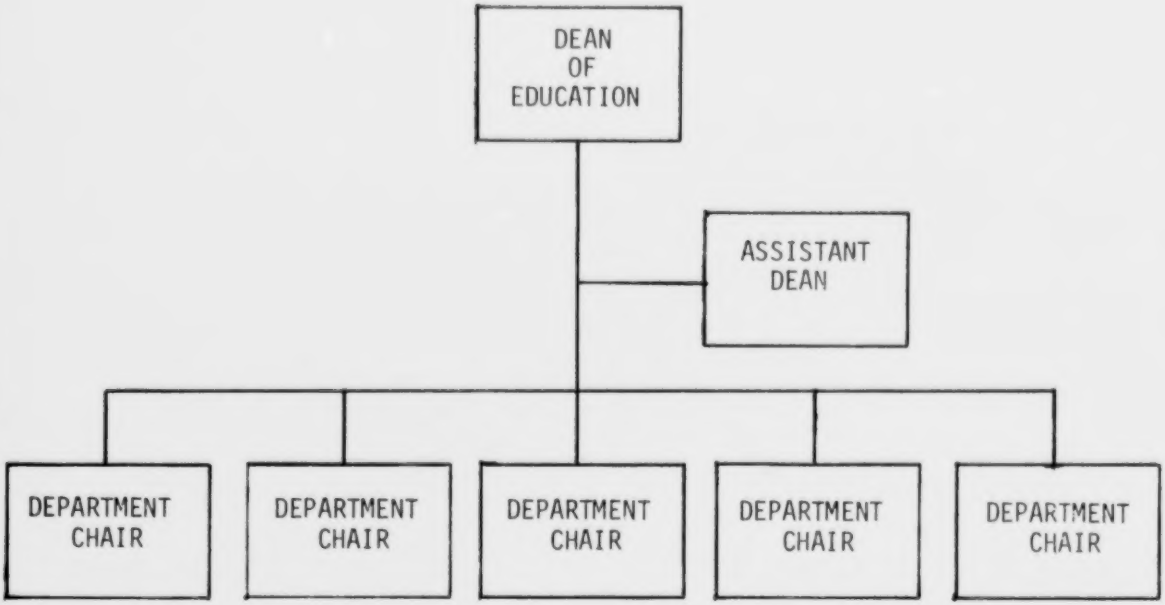

Figure 2. Typical organization for small colleges of education.

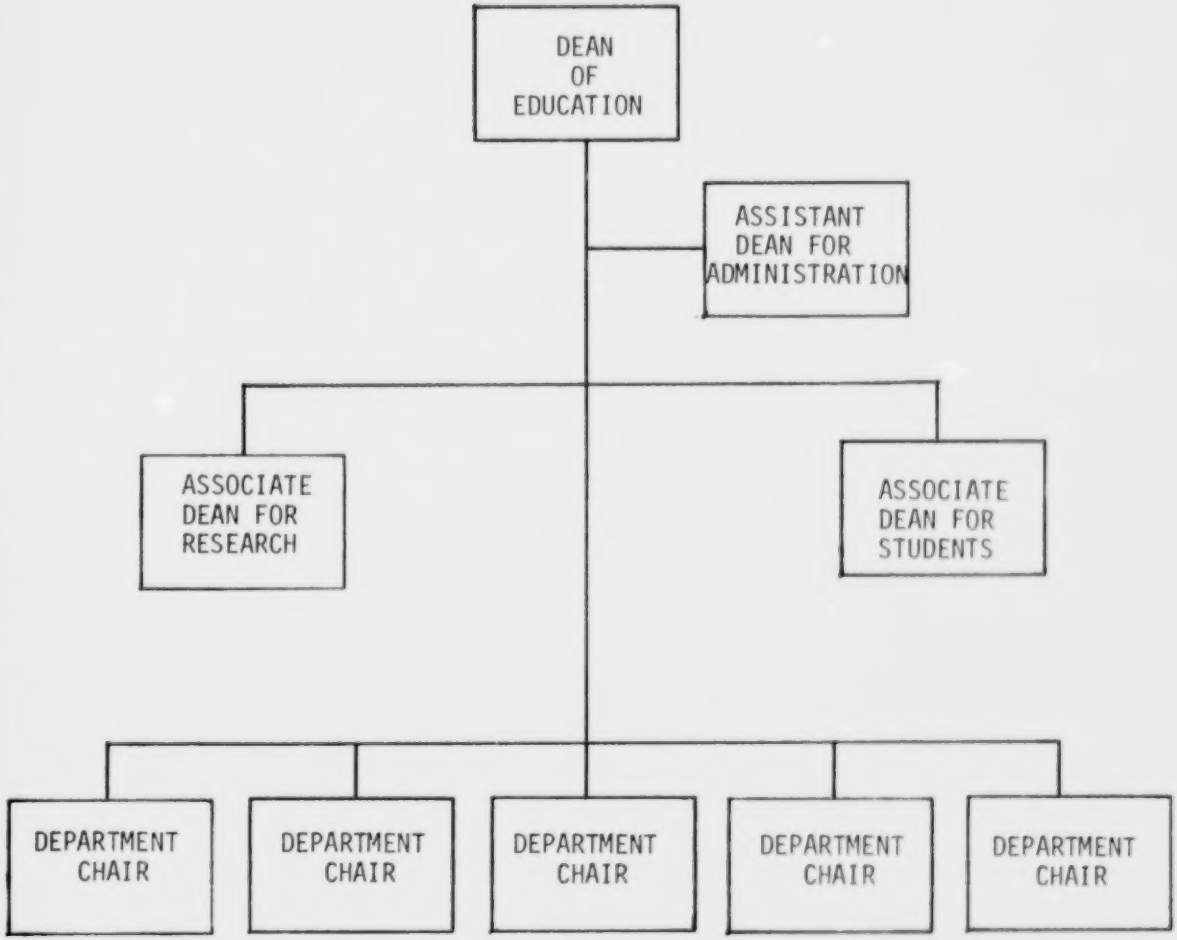

Figure 3. Typical organizations for large colleges of education.